



State of Vermont
Department of Public Service
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David J. O'Brien
Commissioner

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Department of Public Service Announces Public Hearings on Telecommunications Plan Update

Montpelier, Vermont – The Vermont Department of Public Service is pleased to announce two public hearings to give Vermonters the opportunity to raise the issues they would like addressed in the next update to the *Vermont Telecommunications Plan*. The first hearing will be held on Wednesday, August 22, 2007 from 6:15 to 9:15 PM in Contois Auditorium in Burlington's City Hall and will be broadcast live on numerous public access channels statewide. The second hearing will be held on Thursday, August 23, 2007 from 6:15 to 9:15 PM over Vermont Interactive Television (sites listed below).

"The Governor and the Legislature have reiterated this session the paramount importance of telecommunications to the future of Vermont," said Commissioner David O'Brien. "The Telecommunications Plan is a crucial step in our understanding where we have been and where we are going in telecommunications. The previous Plan served as an invaluable guide in taking the recent policy steps we have seen in telecommunications. The first part in the process of completing the Plan is to hear from Vermonters about their priorities in this policy area."

Vermont law directs the Department of Public Service to periodically prepare a telecommunications plan that "shall serve as a basis for state telecommunications policy" (30 V.S.A. §202d). The Plan is both forward-looking and a chance for reasoned assessment of current policy and the telecommunication landscape in Vermont today. The last revision of the plan was released in September of 2004.

While key stakeholders in the public and private sectors are encouraged to attend, these public hearings are a chance for Department officials to listen to the general public and understand the telecommunications issues that matter most to Vermonters. "These initial

public hearings are a chance for the Department to throw the doors open and listen to what Vermonters have to say about telecommunications. If they have a cell phone, landline, Internet connection, cable television or any other communications technology, or if they desire new or improved communications services in their community, this is a chance to be heard,” said Commissioner O’Brien.

Participants in the second hearing – on August 23rd starting at 6:15 PM – can watch and participate from any Vermont Interactive Television site: Bennington, Brattleboro, Castleton, Johnson, Lyndonville, Middlebury, Montpelier, Randolph Center, Rutland, Springfield, St. Albans, Waterbury, White River Junction and Williston. Directions for each of the sites are available online at www.vitlink.org

For more information or to contact the Department of Public Service, call 802.828.2811 (800.734.8390 TTY/TTD) or e-mail vtdps@state.vt.us.

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